



Michigan Association of
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH
Boards

Testimony before the House Families & Children's Services Committee
November 28, 2007

Representative Clack and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Zaagman. I am associate director of the Michigan Association of CMH Boards. Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning on Senate Bill 241 sponsored by Senator Jacobs.

We support Senate Bill 241, and have specific interest in the language on page 4 of the bill defining "children's therapeutic group home." Currently, CMH programs are not able to bill Medicaid for children placed in group home settings even though those children are Medicaid-eligible or current Medicaid recipients because, regardless of size or purpose, small group homes come under the umbrella of child caring institutions.

Several years ago, in an effort to comply with new federal regulations, the Legislature passed a comprehensive bill dealing with seclusion and restraint in child caring institutions. The primary purpose was to place restrictions on when and how restraint and/or seclusion may be utilized. However, simply because restraint and/or seclusion is allowed or utilized in some child caring institutions -- juvenile detention facilities for example -- all CCI's are ineligible for Medicaid reimbursement under federal rules.

The purpose of redefining this subset of CCI's as children's therapeutic group homes is to clarify that these homes are small -- 6 beds or fewer -- and there is NO restraint or seclusion used in these facilities. The obvious intention being our hope to bill Medicaid as you would expect for a child that is eligible for coverage.

To our knowledge, there are no homes of this type and size that are using or have a need to utilize restraint and/or seclusion. We are very grateful to Sen. Jacobs and the Department of Human Services for responding to this much-needed clarification. Combined with some cooperation from the state Medicaid office to seek an amendment to our state Medicaid plan, this change will allow CMH's to better utilize our general fund dollars while placing children in the best, least restrictive and temporary setting for their needs.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy U. Zaagman", is written over a horizontal line.

Amy U. Zaagman
Associate Director